



# California State Parks

## *Quick Facts*



Last updated 1/18/2005

### What's In a Park?

- There are 278 classified and unclassified units in the State park System. Classifications and the number of units in each are:

▪ State Beach	64
▪ State Historical Monument	1
▪ State Historic Park	49
▪ State Park	83
▪ State Recreation Area	31
▪ State Reserve	17
▪ State Seashore	1
▪ State Vehicular Recreation Area	8
▪ Wayside Campground	1
▪ Unclassified properties	23

- These units are organized into 23 districts including the five districts of the Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division.
- 31 state park units are operated by governmental entities other than the California Department of Parks and Recreation.
- California State Parks include: beaches, forests, marshes, forts, missions, ghost towns, cemeteries, churches & temples, underwater areas, lakes, reservoirs, streams, rivers, off-highway vehicle areas, deserts, golf courses, lighthouses, gold mines, sand dunes, meadows, and much more.
- California State Parks contain a wide variety of cultural resources. Many national and ethnic groups are represented at historic and recreation sites; historic businesses, industries, structures, communities and landscapes are recreated and/or interpreted; influential persons and professions are remembered; military and government events and facilities are recognized; and transportation and communication methods are explained.
- A wide variety of artifacts and natural history collections are housed at California State Parks. State Parks is responsible for the documentation, preservation and care of 10,000 known prehistoric and historic archeological sites, 3,000 historic buildings, 1 million museum objects, more than 3 million archival documents, and 2 million archeological specimens. From farming equipment to botanical specimens to horse-drawn vehicles to tapestries, all can be found in park collections.



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Many items are on display, while others are held in storage for study or future exhibits.

- Hearst Castle contains 165 rooms and was toured by more than 740,000 visitors in 2003/04. Five different tours are currently offered.
- California's geologic features, natural habitats, and a wide variety of native plants and animals are well represented and protected in California State Parks.
- 37% of the state and federally listed rare, threatened or endangered species can be found in the State Park System.
- The State Park System has major units within all of the state's ecoregions and geomorphic provinces.
- The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, located primarily in Anza Borrego Desert State Park, was the first of five dedicated National Historic Trails in the United States in 1990. It was elevated to National Millennium Trail status in 1999.
- The nationally recognized Pacific Crest Trail passes through 5 California State Park units. From north to south, they are: Castle Crags State Park, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park, Silverwood Lake State Recreation Area, Mt. San Jacinto State Park, and Anza Borrego Desert State Park.
- The first operating weather station in the 11 western states is located at Fort Ross State Historic Park.
- The 125 Coastal units of the State Park System provide access to over a quarter (27.7%) of California's 1,100 mile long coastline. This is half of the coastal strip open to the public. Half of this is sandy beach.
- The State Park System administers 11.6% (150,943 acres) of California's Coastal Zone, making it – with the possible exception of the federal government – the largest single land holder in that Zone.